

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Forty-ninth Legislature
Second Regular Session
2010

House Engrossed
FILED
KEN BENNETT
SECRETARY OF STATE

HOUSE RESOLUTION 2004

A RESOLUTION

ON THE DEATH OF RICHARD E. HARRIS.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Richard E. Harris passed away at the age of ninety-seven on March 9,
2 2010 in the City of Apache Junction.

3 Mr. Harris was a newspaper journalist, historian, bibliophile, mentor,
4 teacher and an honorable elder of the Black world.

5 Born in Chester, Pennsylvania on October 12, 1912, Mr. Harris started
6 his formal education there, and by the third grade began mastering his
7 studies because of his keen interest in library books and newspapers. Even
8 at a very young age, Mr. Harris wondered why he and his classmates didn't
9 read more literature about African Kings or great Black Americans.

10 Before he became a journalist, Mr. Harris composed two volumes of
11 poetry entitled, "*Verses of Life*", and sold them door to door throughout
12 several Black communities.

13 Mr. Harris' career as a journalist began in 1933 and spanned an
14 incredible seventy years until his retirement in 2003. He worked for ten
15 newspapers across the United States: *The Pittsburgh Courier*, *The*
16 *Afro-American*, *The Cleveland Call-Post*, *The Akron Record*, *The Los Angeles*
17 *Sentinel*, *The Philadelphia Independent*, *The Arizona Sun*, *The Delaware County*
18 *Crusader*, *The Chester Times* and *The Arizona Republic*.

19 Mr. Harris made Arizona history when he became the first
20 African-American news writer to be hired by the Arizona Republic. In
21 addition to writing and editing for newspapers, Mr. Harris wrote and
22 published five historical textbooks: *Delinquency in our Democracy*, *Black*
23 *Heritage in Arizona*, *The First 100 Years: A History of Arizona Blacks*,
24 *Politics and Prejudice: A History of Chester, PA Negroes*, *The Gift of*
25 *Estevan: Black Comrade of Conquistadores* and *The American Journey of a Black*
26 *Journalist*.

27 At age 54, Mr. Harris began a twelve year stint as Coordinator of Youth
28 Cultural Activities for the Phoenix Urban League where his young protégés
29 published several newspapers and produced dramatic plays for the community.

30 During his sunset years, Mr. Harris also made time to help found the
31 first Arizona Black Historical and Genealogical Society and help organize the
32 George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center.

33 Mr. Richard E. Harris was a true Arizona pioneer and a monumental
34 trailblazer whose life and intellectual gifts will sorely be missed by
35 present and future generations.

36 Therefore

37 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Arizona:

38 That the Members of the House of Representatives express sincere regret
39 at the death of Richard E. Harris and extend their deepest sympathies to his
40 surviving family members.

UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE MARCH 25, 2010.

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE MARCH 25, 2010.